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By
J. J. MURPHY

2: "Catholic Education and Crime"

By
L. H. LEHMANN

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THE CATHOLIC CHURCH vs. THE PUBLIC SCHOOLS

By J. J. MURPHY

THE ROMAN CATHOLIC church authorities apply to themselves in the most literal sense the words of Jesus Christ, "All power is given to me in heaven and on earth." They claim supreme and unquestionable power over the intellectual, social and moral lives of all men both as individuals and as nations. This authoritarian rule is centered primarily in the Pope. It is exercised in every field of thought and action, including first and foremost the field of education. Pope Pius XI in his encyclical on education, issued December 31, 1929, categorically declared:

"In the first place, education belongs preëminently to the [Catholic] Church for two supernatural reasons . . . As for the scope of the Church's educative mission, it extends over all peoples without any limitation, according to Christ's command: 'Teach ye all nations.' Nor is there a civil power which can oppose or prevent it . . . And the Church has been able to do so much because her educative mission extends also to the non-faithful . . ."

The Catholic church's contempt for the prerogatives of the State and its sovereign people is matched by its arrogant claim to be the *only educator of the world*. In its opinion the State's sole right and duty in regard to education is to collect taxes for the establishment and maintenance of Catholic schools. Even in the past century the Catholic church did not hesitate to make this claim openly in this Protestant, democratic country. Orestes Brownson, well-known Catholic author and publisher, wrote at that time as follows:

"We deny, of course, as Catholics, the right of the civil government to educate; for education is a function of the spiritual society [the Roman Catholic church], as much as preaching and the administration of the sacraments . . . We deny the competency of the State to educate even for its own order, or its right to establish purely secular schools."¹

ATTACK ON PUBLIC SCHOOLS

To the mind of the Catholic church everything is black or white. What the church condemns is absolute evil, what it approves is absolute good. How this applies to education can be seen from the words of Jesuit Father Paul L. Blakely in an article bitterly castigating the public schools in the Sept. 20, 1930, issue of *America*:

"The school, if not a temple' quotes Pope Pius XI, 'is a den.' The public school has never claimed to be a temple. Whatever its pretensions in this respect, it is, most assuredly, something which Catholics must oppose . . . If Catholics do not oppose public schools, what is the meaning of the Encyclical of 1929?"

How Catholics are taught to fight tooth and nail against public-school education is illustrated in the pamphlet by the above-mentioned Jesuit, published by the *America* press, *May An American Oppose the Public School?* There the following orders are laid down:

"Our first duty to the public school is not to pay taxes for its maintenance."

"The first duty of every Catholic father to the public school is to keep his children out of it."

¹ Orestes A. Brownson's *Views*, page 64.

"But for the Catholic father, who, without episcopal sanction, sends his child to the public school when he could enter him at a Catholic institution, there is no excuse in heaven or on earth. He has begun the career of a Herod; it will be no fault of his if he is not guilty of soul-murder."

"And every parish school in the land is a protest . . . and an active, energetic opposition to the damnable doctrine that a Catholic may approve of that system in which religion is dissociated from education."

The truth of the matter is that the Catholic church as an international authoritarian system is essentially opposed not only to democracy but also to the principle of free public education



JESUIT PAUL L. BLAKELY

. . . "Our first duty to the public school is not to pay taxes for its maintenance."
—from his booklet: "May An American Oppose the Public School?" p. 5.

on which it is grounded. It finds that illiterate people are most subject to its commands, and to this end makes it a prime point of policy to keep them illiterate. It is no accident that people dominated by Roman Catholicism for centuries are illiterate. Over 60% of the Portuguese cannot read. This same is true of Spain, Poland, Croatia, Slovakia, Mexico, and the nations of Latin America. Quebec has always been the most illiterate province in Canada and till 1943, education there was not compulsory. In a Protestant country like the United States, where competition forces Catholicism to use make-up, it seldom reveals its underlying contempt for mass education, even for mere literacy. But occasionally its bitterness boils over. Such was the self-revelation in the following lines quoted from the Jesuit magazine *America* (October 31, 1931):

"This business of teaching every child indiscriminately how to read and write results in nothing more than mass illiteracy. The man who reads and writes badly, as the great majority do today, is more illiterate than the man who does not read at all . . . One heresy breeds another. This indiscriminate 'education' applied to all alike under State systems is the result of the heresy of the equality of man."

The bulwark of American democracy is the public school. To undermine the public school, America's living object lesson in equality and tolerance, the Catholic church has incessantly defamed it. First it objected to it because it read verses from the Bible. Once it succeeded in banishing from many state school systems this symbolic token of religious belief, it started denouncing the system as Godless and pagan. It continues to denounce it as socialistic, Communistic, atheistic, criminal,

immoral and un-American in an effort to prejudice people against it. The excerpts from Catholic sources that follow will serve to implement this point.

Jesuit Father Francis P. Le Buffe's speech at a communion breakfast of New York City employees was quoted in the *N. Y. Times* of May 17, 1943, as follows:

"Thanks to our Godless American public school system, which is un-American, we have a generation that does not know God."

Jesuit Father Robert I. Gannon, President of Fordham University, at the 172nd annual banquet of the Chamber of Commerce of the State of New York, ridiculed the public schools as breeders of unbalanced criminals. The Catholic Brooklyn *Tablet* of Dec. 14, 1940, quoted him as saying that "now every time we put in an order for a classroom, we have to include an order for two sanitary cells and a chromium gibbet."

Monsignor Fulton J. Sheen in an attack on the fundamentals of democracy in his *Catholic Hour* radio broadcast of Sunday, Jan. 18, 1942, declared his opposition to our public schools as follows:

"A system of education which ignores, sometimes repudiates religion and morality, which trains the intellect but ignores the will, which teaches that there is no such thing as right and wrong . . . is not worth preserving. Let it perish!"

In their fierce hatred of the public school system of America some propagandists stoop to vilest calumnies:

"The object then of these Godless irreligious Public Schools is to spread among the people the worst of religions, the no-religion, the religion which pleases the most hardened adulterers and criminals—the religion of irrational animals. The moral character of the Public Schools in many of our cities has sunk so low, that even courtesans have disguised

themselves as school girls in order the more surely to ply their foul vocation."²

CATHOLIC INFILTRATION

In their plan to overthrow the American public-school system and substitute in its place a sectarian system of education supported by the State, a sort of union of Church and State, the Catholic hierarchy is following a carefully laid strategy. It aims at driving a wedge into the present public-school system by securing 'released time' for sectarian religious instruction. It is interesting to note that as early as 1940 Dr. George Shuster, leading Catholic propagandist, admitted in the winter edition of *The American Scholar* that Catholic strategists were the real originators of the 'released time' movement:

"Realizing that segregation was impossible, wideawake Catholic leaders started a movement to foster religious instruction in the public schools."

Several other wedges were forced into the system at every possible opportunity by obtaining for private parish schools various forms of government support. The Jesuit monthly, *The Catholic Mind*, in December, 1943, argued the case this way:

"Extra-curricular services such as free transportation, books, food, etc. and subsidies such as Federal grants-in-aid are based on needs that are shared equally by the pupils of government and voluntary schools. To deny them to the pupils of one group of schools only, allowing them to the pupils of the other group, violates justice and the right of the parent to direct the education of the child. That is not the American way."

Catholics have frequently secured public funds from the Federal government for the building, maintenance and repair of parochial schools. The follow-

² Michael Muller, *Public School Education*, as quoted by James M. King, *Facing the Twentieth Century*, page 341.

ing account from the *Press Herald Bureau* of Washington, D. C., on September 10, 1943, is a sample of what is being done in many dioceses but without press notices:

"The Federal Works Agency has allocated \$33,457 to rebuild the two-story school at Brunswick, which was recently burned down. This includes re-equipping the school. The applicant is the Roman Catholic Bishop of Portland, Maine."

Whenever the opportunity arises Catholics proceed to take over public-school buildings for their purposes. Oftener than not they can find guileless Protestant ministers to pull their chestnuts out of the fire. In Milltown, N. J., according to *The Christian Science Monitor* of July 6, 1943, the pupils of Milltown's only public school "are dismissed as pupils of a secular school at 11:10 a.m. and immediately, with some exceptions, the same pupils become members of a religious school." After this went on for a while, Dr. Charles H. Elliot, New Jersey Commissioner of Education, intervened declaring the use of a public school for sectarian purposes to be contrary to the law of the State, even though sanctioned by the local Board of Education.

The *Brockton Daily Enterprise* of Brockton, Massachusetts, in its issue of Dec. 16, 1943, carried a news article under the headline, "Asks Franklin Public School Space For Use By Parochial Pupils." The paper went on to tell how the local pastor of St. Rocco's Roman Catholic church had requested the use of a public-school building as a parochial school for his parish. The priest seemed so certain of getting his request that he didn't bother appearing in person before the school board. The Catholic mayor appointed a committee to consider the matter.

Last year a bill was introduced into

the legislature of the state of Alabama to appropriate \$5,000 a year toward the maintenance of a parochial school in Mobile.

In some Catholic sections of the country the Catholic church virtually takes over the public schools without any legal transfer. Father J. A. Burns of Catholic University, Washington, D. C., in a book entitled *Growth and Development of the Catholic School System in the United States* (p. 329) speaks of this as follows:

"But in many districts throughout the Southwest in which the population is entirely or almost entirely Catholic, the public schools naturally reflect the attitude of the people toward religion and assume more or less of a Catholic tone."

PAROCHIAL SCHOOLS

Catholics often pretend that their parochial schools are in every respect the same as public schools, except that at short specified periods the Catholic religion is taught. The facts are quite the contrary. The parochial school aims at giving its young impressionable pupils a Catholic class-consciousness, at giving them a one-sided Catholic view on all social, political and religious problems. For this reason the textbooks used in public-school classes do not suit their sectarian purpose; the Second Council of Baltimore, in 1833, insisted on Catholic textbooks whenever possible and on the revision of public-school textbooks whenever there was no alternative but to use them.

Father Edward McGlynn, who was excommunicated because of his defense of the public-school system, rightly said of parochial schools that they "are promoted by those who, educated in foreign lands, are but half democratic." It might also be added that many teachers in these schools for generations were able to speak only broken English. Father Burns in the above-quoted book

(p. 130) gives us the following picture:

"Catholics were eager to have the Brothers and Sisters in their schools, even though fresh from Germany or France . . . Often, indeed, they took up the work of teaching in English-speaking schools after being in the country only a few weeks. The Sisters of Notre Dame of Namur, for instance, reached Cincinnati October 30, 1840, and on the 18th of the January following when they opened school only one of the band was able to speak English fluently. The case was typical . . . The Sister who could speak English went from class to class in order to help until the teachers had acquired enough English to talk with their pupils. Sometimes a Sister would leave the room and returning with a slate, read from it what she wished to say."

Even today there are several hundred parochial schools in this country where fully half of the course is taught in a foreign language, and English itself takes a secondary place. The Roman Catholic church conducts parochial schools in the following languages: French, German, Italian, Polish, Slovak, Bohemian, Lithuanian, Hungarian, and Ruthenian. A picture of one of these Catholic foreign schools was drawn by a Roman Catholic priest in the *Catholic Standard and Times*, official organ of the Philadelphia archdiocese, in its issue of Jan. 29, 1910:

"A girl enters the convent; she is perhaps possessed of an elementary education, and perhaps she is not. If she has advanced to the threshold of high school she has done well . . . Three years later, perhaps but two later, little Wladislawa, whom you prepared for First Holy Communion four or five years ago, is hurried out to your neighbor's parish, where she is doing a work that will soon wear the life out of her, for it is beyond her power. There has been no time for training her along educational lines, certainly not along pedagogical lines . . ."

The Catholic people themselves as a matter of fact never wanted the parochial school. They felt no need for it. Even today after over a hundred years of effort, backed by threats of excommunication, 57 per cent of the Catholic youth attends public schools.³ This is confirmed by Thomas F. Byron, a Roman Catholic of Lowell, Massachusetts:

"For the parochial school was never desired by the American Catholic people, neither were they even so much as asked to say whether they wanted it or not, nor do they for the most part regard it with any feeling but that of irksomeness now. The thinking class of Catholics would be glad to get rid of it, if this could only be done quietly and without public scandal. To the minds of nine Catholics out of every ten, the parochial school was no more needed in this country than a fifth wheel for a coach."⁴

It is not only Catholic laymen who resent the zeal of school-boasting prelates who have an eye set on higher ecclesiastical honors. Many Catholic priests resent the narrow, un-American atmosphere of parochial schools. Few of them have the courage to express their opinions in public as did the anonymous priest who wrote "*The Heresy of the Parochial School*" in the February, 1928, issue of the *Atlantic Monthly*. However he expressed their deep conviction when he said:

"We are a people self-ostracized. Our children may not sit in the classroom with the children of the unorthodox. We must have our own schools, our own charities, our own graveyards . . . When the Catholic child is six years old, he is taken to an inquisition as relentless as that over which presided the notorious Torquemada. More violence is done to tender souls by the intellec-

³Conrad Henry Moehlman, *School and Church: The American Way*, p. 75.

⁴Quoted by James M. King, *op. cit.*, page 345.

tual lack of the parochial schoolroom than was done to the bodies of other victims in the past . . . There is but one quality that proves the excellence of a religion. It is the excellence of the lives lived by its devotees. When the American bishops cease their school-building crusade and begin the work of developing Christian character there will be hope for the Catholic church in America."

Catholics should attend public schools to learn racial and religious tolerance. With this instruction in secular knowledge they could unite as much outside Catholic instruction as they pleased in their own schools. What is preventing them from instituting a system of religious instruction similar to that of the Jewish religion which is outlined by Morris Fine, as quoted in Bishop Noll's scurrilous attack on the public-school system in a book called, *Public Enemy No. 1*? Mr. Fine says:

"In New York City, for example, there exists a system of weekday schools maintained by the Jewish community which provides not one but five to twelve hours of instruction each week. In addition there are Sabbath schools, Sunday schools and Yiddish schools."

When the Catholic church is unable to impose its rulings on its so-called communicants, it invariably attempts to get the State to act as its agent. Most Catholics disregard the rules and threats of the Catholic church in regard to birth control, so the church is attempting to make its birth control regulations a matter of State law. Likewise with parochial school attendance. Half the Catholics ignore the parochial schools, so the church is trying desperately to make the State support these schools so that the attendance of Catholics will become a matter of State law.

This discussion of public and parochial schools was clearly synopsized in the words written in an editorial of the *N. Y. Times* on January 13, 1930, in criticism of Pope Pius XI's attack on the public-school system:

"The Pope's encyclical sounds a note that will startle Americans, for it assails an institution dearest to them—the public school—without which it is hardly conceivable that democracy could long exist. As was said only yesterday by a critical authority, despite its shortcomings and mistakes, the public school has 'already contributed to society more than all the other agencies combined.' Under its tuitions not only are the elemental lessons which the race has learned taught to children of diverse traditions, racial qualities and religious faiths, but these children have been prepared to live together as citizens in a self-governing state . . . If other churches were to make like claim—that is, that 'the educative mission belongs preëminently' to them for their children, and were to lay like inhibitions, the very foundations of this Republic would be disturbed."

THE AMERICAN WAY

Many Protestant ministers have been led by Catholic propaganda in to opposing the public-school system on the grounds that it does not teach religion. They fail to realize that the Catholic church opposes public schools, not because they fail to teach religion *as such*, but because they do not teach Roman Catholicism. Rome's aim and ideal is to dominate education to the exclusion of all other religions, as it does under Catholic dictatorships in Spain, Portugal and Argentina. Its first step in this direction within the United States is to undermine the public-school system as it now stands by making its parochial schools State-supported. From then on its aggressiveness, working through Catholic public-

school teachers and otherwise, will gradually seize control of the entire school system. Those who think such designs fantastic have only to reflect on how our small Catholic minority has already obtained the balance of political power in our predominantly Protestant country.

Religious education is a good thing, and everyone favors it. But it has nothing in common with *sectarian religious control* of our public schools, which would strike at the root of our democratic government. It would lead here, as in Argentina, to segregation of Jew from Gentile, of Protestant from Catholic. It would departmentalize our American school system into a 'ghetto' for Jews, an heretical section for Protestants, a schismatic division for Orthodox Greek Catholics, and various limbos for Mohammedans, agnostics and other classes of unbelievers and religious dissidents. This is not the American way which teaches that various creeds must learn to work and live together in mutual tolerance. Our American way is against sectarianism in public schools, not because it opposes religion, but because it wishes to preserve religious freedom from the inroads of any politically powerful religious sect.

ILLITERACY IN CATHOLIC COUNTRIES

COUNTRIES that Roman Catholicism has dominated for centuries, like Spain, Portugal, Central and South America, and the Philippines are largely illiterate. The pitifully inarticulate and voiceless millions of these Catholic countries, imprisoned in mind and soul, remain helpless victims of superstition and ignorance. Dr. Frank C. Laubach, author of *The Silent Billion Speak* and a devout Protestant, has organized a world movement that is meeting with remarkable success in

combating illiteracy. He has well earned the title, "Apostle of the Illiterates." Last year he left for Latin America, under the joint auspices of two Protestant missionary organizations, 'The Committee on Co-operation in Latin America,' and 'The Committee on World Literacy and Christian Literature.' Illiteracy in Latin America varies between 60 and 80 per cent, depending on the locality.

It is no mere accident that Catholic countries are kept ignorant. Catholicism demands a docility and blind obedience that can be obtained with the least difficulty only from the illiterate. What happens in a Catholic country is illustrated in Spain. Gerald Brenan in his scholarly new work, *The Spanish Labyrinth*, (pp. 49-51) says:

"Until 1836 education had been entirely in the hands of the higher clergy and the religious orders . . . In the elementary schools the children of the poor were deliberately not taught to read, but only to sew and to recite catechism."

This condition extended down to 1910, when, as the author tells us:

". . . the Catholic religion and catechism were compulsorily taught in all the schools and the parish priest had a right to supervise this. So far did this sometimes go that parents used to complain that in State Schools the children passed half their class hours in saying the rosary and in absorbing sacred history and never learned to read."

Educational conditions in modern Italy are described in an article by Peter Wilson, published in the Italian edition of *Union Jack*, British Army paper:

"The educational system in Italy is divided into four sections. The elementary which begins at five years of age and goes on until a child is 10 . . . But the only free education is the elementary one. If you're too poor to pay school fees—well, you just don't go to school after you're 10."

Here in America one does not have to go south of the border to find that Catholic disapproval of education has left its mark. Quebec, dominated by Roman Catholicism, has been the only province in Canada where education was not compulsory. At this late date measures are now being taken to remedy this lamentable condition, following an exposé of conditions in Quebec in the October 19, 1942, issue of *Life*. An official publication of the Canadian government based on the census of 1931, *Illiteracy and School Attendance, Census monograph No. 5*, shows that in the male population over ten years of age the percentage of illiteracy for Roman Catholic French Canadians is 6.18 per cent as contrasted with 0.88 per cent for the British races of Canada, who are overwhelmingly Protestant.

The hierarchy of Quebec never took any steps to urge or oblige Catholic parents to educate their children, except in Catholic doctrine. It did, however, forbid them, under penalty of non-forgiveness of sins to send their

children to any school except a Catholic school. In an official communication of August 31, 1942, Cardinal Villeneuve declared:

"To parents, who, having been duly warned, continue to send their children to a non-Catholic school without the permission of the bishop, confessors must refuse absolution."

(Diocesan Discipline, art. 454, b.)

In refusing such elementary rights as that of education to children, Cardinal Villeneuve is only living up to the condemnation of all modern liberties contained in the encyclicals of Pope Pius IX and Pope Leo XIII. Cardinal Villeneuve is officially on record as having publicly condemned these same liberties in practically the same words as those used by the Popes. *Life* magazine in its issue of October 19, 1942, quoted him as follows:

"It is never permitted . . . to grant freedom of thought, writing or teaching, and the undifferentiated freedom of religions, as so many rights which nature has given to man."

CATHOLIC EDUCATION AND CRIME

By L. H. LEHMANN

THE AVERAGE AGE of criminals in America in 1890 is said to have been 48 years; in 1933, 26 years and in 1938-40, about 19 years. War conditions after 1940 brought an alarming increase in juvenile delinquency that lowered the average crime age to sixteen. As a consequence, there has been a growing demand for the teaching of religion in the public schools as a possible deterrent to crime increase among American youth. The demand is loudest from spokesmen of the Roman Catholic church, which not only aims to have religion made a part of the public school curriculum but claims the right of being the sole educator of all youth.

Catholic spokesmen, from the pope down, are vociferous in condemning American public school education as "Godless" because of the very wise and necessary provision of our Constitution to keep secular education and church teaching rigidly apart. This, however, does not mean a denial of the benefits of good religious and ethical training as a part of the education of the youth of this country. Religion, in fact, has always been an essential part of the general education of youth in America, but denominational teaching has been kept out of the classroom. Our Constitutional amendment concerning separation of church and state not only does not prohibit the profession and teaching of true religion, but it guarantees and safeguards liberty of conscience and

of worship to all religions not subversive of the American way of life. What it does prohibit is the "establishment" by law and tax support of any religion. The teaching of the religion of any church in the classrooms of the public schools would soon lead to that.

Many states are relaxing or changing their constitutional provisions to allow school boards to cooperate with religious organizations by devoting "released" time from school to religious instruction. To many this seems to be the entering wedge for the actual introduction of specific church teaching into the classroom. From that it would be but one step further to other privileges fostering this or that religious organization at public expense and upholding religious teaching by public law.

This is happening because many have been convinced that the alarming increase in crime among young people today can best be overcome by uniting the teaching of religion with mathematics and other school subjects heretofore taught in a "Godless" way, as the Catholics call it. But before admitting that the mixing of religious and non-religious teaching would lessen the prevalence of crime, two things should be carefully considered:

(1) *Has the teaching of religion in private schools lessened crime among their pupils compared with pupils from public schools?*

(2) *Is all religious teaching productive of correct ethical conduct?*

CATHOLIC CRIME STATISTICS

If New York City be taken as a sample of war-time juvenile delinquency, the Roman Catholic church must take the largest share of responsibility. Father George B. Ford, Roman Catholic chaplain at Columbia University and authority on social matters, is on record as admitting that *more than three-fifths of the juvenile delinquents arrested in New York City in the early part of 1943 were Roman Catholics*. As quoted in the newspaper *PM* of February 29, 1944, he declared:

"During the first four months of 1943, 64 per cent of the juvenile delinquents in Children's Court were Catholic. This means the Catholic church has something to be greatly concerned about."

How grave an indictment of the Roman Catholic church this is may be judged from the fact that *only about one-fifth of the total population of New York City is Roman Catholic*.

The same amazing percentage of Roman Catholics is to be found among the most hardened adult criminals in jails and penitentiaries. A sample of this may be seen at Clinton Prison, Dannemora, N. Y., which is called the "Siberia of America," both because of its frigid climate and the high percentage of long-termers and lifers. In a feature article in the N. Y. *Daily Mirror* of March 12, 1941, lauding efforts of the Roman Catholic church to reform the many Catholics there, it is revealed that *of the total prison population of 1,989 at Dannemora, twelve hundred are Roman Catholics*. Reporting the results of a religious survey of all the jails of Connecticut the *Catholic Commonwealth* magazine for October 9, 1942, says: "Catholics far outnumber Protestants in Connecticut jails, possibly by four to one."

Despite facts such as these, Catholic spokesmen in America continue to condemn the public schools of the United States as the breeding centers of American crime. They point to America's "great horde of practicing pagans in the medical and legal professions," to educators in American schools "misinforming and misdirecting students," and predict in dire terms the complete undermining of Western civilization unless religion (the Roman Catholic religion) is taught in our public schools and secular colleges and universities. Their diatribes against our American democratic way of life are too closely reminiscent of the Fascist outpourings of Mussolini and Hitler in the heyday of their power.

In the N. Y. *Times* of May 17, 1943, Jesuit Father Francis P. Le Buffe declared:

"Thanks to our godless American public school, which is un-American, we have a generation today which does not know God."

The amazing part of it all is the supineness of groups of otherwise intelligent, alert business and professional men who listen to such utterances, accepting them without question, overwhelmed, it seems, by the oracular and pontifical manner in which they are delivered.

An outstanding example of this was an address of the Jesuit president of Fordham University, the Rev. Robert I. Gannon, before a no less august body than the Chamber of Commerce of the State of New York at their 172nd Annual Banquet in 1940, and repeated by him many times since at important public gatherings. The speaker's main object of attack was our public school education—because it does not permit the teaching of religion, that is, of

course, the Roman Catholic religion¹. To this lack he ascribed the high percentage of criminals inside and outside of our jails. Sneering at Ezra Cook's truly American and practical adage: "Better build schoolrooms for the boys than cells and gibbets for the man", he added "*but now every time we put in an order for a classroom, we have to include an order for two sanitary cells and a chromium gibbet*"!

He quoted glibly from a report by the Citizens' Committee on the Control of Crime in New York to prove how crime is on the rapid increase with no signs of abatement, and that "one New Yorker in every 53 was arrested in the course of the past year—not for traffic violations or for leaving ash cans uncovered, but for serious violations of the law". He further proved to his amazed audience that the rest of the country is even worse in this regard than New York. Since the honorable body of outstanding citizens who comprise the Chamber of Commerce of the State of New York made no protest nor questioned the speaker's conclusion, they must all have gone home convinced that we are a wayward, if not lost nation solely because the teaching of the Catholic religion is divorced from our public school system of education.

Had any member of Father Gannon's audience been quick and brave enough to tackle the underlying significance of his statistics on crime, the Jesuit's pre-arranged conclusion could have been proved utterly false and misleading. For he carefully avoided any approach to the well-known and provable fact that an ab-

¹ The full text of Father Gannon's speech may be seen in the *Catholic Brooklyn Tablet*, Dec. 14, 1940. It will repay reading in full.

normally high proportion of our prison populations is the product of the Roman Catholic church and its educational system where religion, the Roman Catholic religion, is the most important subject in the curriculum. In order to confirm and explain this fact, the writer of this article personally interviewed Mr. H. C. Kane, the chief observer in the criminal courts for that same Committee on the Control of Crime from whose report Father Gannon quoted his findings. Mr. Kane's frank opinion was, that the teaching of religion in the public schools would seem to provide no deterrent to crime, since Roman Catholics numerically top all crime lists and the Catholic church exceeds all others in teaching religion in schools.

The statistics below fully bear out this conclusion. They are not taken from anti-Catholic sources, not even from the cold, impartial figures supplied by Government bureaus. In order to be scrupulously fair, I have taken them from official Catholic sources, from the published results of a lengthy and careful survey made by the Fr. Leo Kalmer, O.F.M., Chaplain at Illinois State Penitentiary, Joliet, Ill., from 1917 to 1936, the year of publication². His facts and figures were supplied to him by thirty-six Roman Catholic prison chaplains throughout the country. There can therefore be no possibility that the figures have been unfairly made up by us to overstress the greater prevalence of crime among Catholics.

On page 54, Table II, are shown the following percentages of Catholics in

² cf. *Crime and Religion*, by Leo Kalmer, O.F.M. Preface by the Very Rev. Francis J. Haas, Ph.D., Franciscan Herald Press, Chicago, Ill. 1936.

the prisons named:

	Catholics
Florence, Ariz.	53.33%
State Pen., San Quentin, Cal.	46.92%
State Pen., Wethersfield, Conn.	63.64%
Ill. State Pen., Joliet	48.50%
So. Ill. State Pen., Chester	7.88%
Indiana State Prison, Mich. City	7.69%
State Prison, Ft. Madison, Ia.	8.51%
La. State Pen., Baton Rouge	16.22%
Md. Pen., Baltimore	21.91%
State Prison, Charleston, Mass.	53.29%
State Prison, Jackson, Mich.	10.00%
Miss. State Pen., Parchman	0.94%
State Pen., Jefferson City, Mo.	22.03%
State Pen., Lincoln, Nebr.	27.69%
State Prison, Trenton, N. J.	47.61%
State Pen., Santa Fe, N. Mex.	66.67%
Auburn Prison, Auburn, N. Y.	57.31%
Sing Sing Prison, Ossining, N. Y.	54.77%
Ohio Pen., Columbus	25.01%
State Prison, McAlester, Okla.	1.76%
Oregon State Pen., Salem	15.63%
Eastern State Pen., Phila., Pa.	36.15%
The Pen., Columbus, S. C.	1.00%
Tenn. State Prison, Nashville	2.71%
Brushby Mt. Prison, Petros, Tenn.	0.63%
State Pen., Huntsville, Texas	12.20%
State Prison, Salt Lake City, U.	32.79%
West Va. Pen., Moundsville	9.96%
Wisc. State Prison, Waupun	43.52%
State Pen., Rawlins, Wyo.	28.85%
U. S. Pen., Atlanta, Ga.	21.20%
U. S. Pen., Leavenworth, Kans.	23.44%

In judging these percentages it must be remembered that Catholics, according to their church's own estimates, form only about 16% of the total population of the United States. On Page 76 of Father Kalmer's book, Table III shows that in a selection of 28 States, the average Catholic population is slightly higher, but still only 17.24%, whereas the average Catholic prison population in those same 28 States is 33.62%.

But if we select a few typical States, we find the following:

New York:	26.73% of total population is Catholic
" "	56.46% of prison population is Catholic
Arizona:	33.16% of total population is Catholic
" "	53.26% of prison population is Catholic

California: 16.83% of total population is Catholic

" 43.61% of prison population is Catholic

Wisconsin: 23.79% of total population is Catholic

" 43.52% of prison population is Catholic

Wyoming: 7.13% of total population is Catholic

" 32.18% of prison population is Catholic

Not all of the Catholic criminals listed above by the Catholic prison chaplains attended parochial schools. The percentages are as follows: attended Catholic schools only: 20.82%; attended both Catholic and public schools: 26.89%; attended public schools only: 35.85%; attended no school: 16.64%.

It should be noted that these Catholic prison chaplains put forward the argument, as in their favor, that the majority of Catholics committed to prison are either of foreign birth or parentage, mostly Italian, Spanish, Polish, Austrian and Irish. This, however, does not serve to exculpate the Catholic church, since these are Catholic countries *par excellence*, where "Roman Catholic culture" is most effective. On the contrary, it only serves to show that our much-maligned traditional American secular education and non-Catholic culture cannot be blamed for the crime increase in this country. The balance, therefore, in every instance—both as to religion and type of schooling—is in favor of non-Catholic upbringing and our secular public school education.

If we turn to official government statistics of the number of criminals committed to prisons each year, we find that a consistently abnormal 50 per cent or more of them are Roman Catholics. This can be seen from the most recent *Annual Reports of the Commissioner of Correction in the State of New*

York to the State Legislature. In the latest available report for the year ending June 30, 1942, we find the follow-

ing figures of prisoners committed to the two largest New York prisons—Clinton (Dannemora) and Sing Sing:*

	Total	Roman Caths.	Greek Caths.	Protestants	Jews	Misc.
Clinton	159	80	...	74	3	2
Sing Sing	1,303	627	10	514	130	22

For the year ending June 30, 1941, we find the following (page 19):

	Total	Roman Caths.	Protestants	Pagans	Jews	Misc.
Clinton	149	80	65	...	4	...
Sing Sing	1,477	725	581	5	152	14

For the year 1940, when Father Gannon delivered his diatribe before the N. Y. State Chamber of Commerce against the "Godlessness" of American secular education, the following figures

on the religious affiliation of criminals committed to the above two prisons were submitted to the New York Legislature by the Commissioner of Correction (page 18):

	Total	Roman Caths.	Protestants	Jews	Misc.
Clinton	168	89	76	1	2
Sing Sing	1,559	788	574	175	22

There were no "pagans" committed that year to these two prisons.

The same average of 50 per cent Roman Catholic criminals committed to these two jails is listed consistently year after year in these reports. The significance of this high percentage can be judged by the fact that *Roman Catholics make up only about 25 per cent of the total population of New York State.*

THE NATURE OF CATHOLIC RELIGIOUS TEACHING

This second aspect of education and crime requires probing into a matter that tolerant Americans want to avoid. Everybody is afraid to connect crime with any religious teaching. Yet if it could be proved that crime were more prevalent, say, among Mormons, Methodists or Mennonites in proportion to crime among other religious sects, Catholic authorities would not hesitate to ask whether this is not due to the moral teachings of those sects. One should not hesitate, therefore, to pose this same question with regard to Roman Catholicism, since it is an admitted fact that crime among Roman Catholics is more than twice what it should be (all other things being equal) in propor-

tion to the relative number of Catholics in the United States.

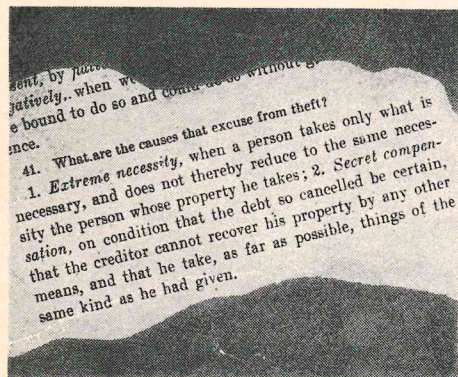
Space here permits consideration of only one principle of Roman Catholic moral theology which could easily have a direct bearing on the question, namely, *the condoning of theft and robbery under certain circumstances.* This is known among Catholic theologians as "occult compensation". It is also contained in catechisms and textbooks of Catholic doctrine used in Catholic schools in the United States. It is to be found, for instance, in *The Manual of Christian Doctrine*, which went into its 49th edition in 1928, and which bears the *nihil obstat* of M. S. Fisher, S.T.L., *ensor librorum*, and of Arthur J. Scanlon, S.T.D., *ensor deputatus*, along with the *imprimatur* of Cardinal-Archbishop Dougherty of Philadelphia, and is published by John J. McVey, Philadelphia, Pa. In the preface we are told that, "This book is intended as a manual of religious instruction

* cf. *Annual Report of the Commissioner of Correction for the Year 1942* (published in 1943), page 18.

not only in the novitiate and scholasticate of teaching congregations, but also in the classes of high school, academies and colleges." On page 295, this textbook describes and discusses theft, its nature and various forms, such as larceny, robbery, cheating, fraud, extortion, etc. On page 297, we have the following regarding the condoning of theft:

"Q. What are the causes that excuse from theft?"

"A. 1. Extreme necessity, when a person takes only what is necessary, and does not thereby reduce to the same necessity the person whose property he takes. 2. Secret compensation, on condition that the debt so cancelled be certain, that the creditor cannot recover his property by any other means, and that he take, as far as possible, things of the same kind as he had given."



Facsimile photograph from page 297 of *The Manual of Christian Doctrine*.

Now, moral conduct can be no better than the moral principles upon which it is based. Most crimes are directly connected with thievery and robbery.*

* The N. Y. State Commissioner of Correction in his report for 1942 on juvenile delinquency (p. 112) states: "Stealing is the reason for court appearances of the largest group among boys, 4,307 or 53.7 per cent having been referred for stealing in some form."

If a Roman Catholic youth, for instance, can persuade himself that he has "extreme necessity" for an automobile, he will consider himself justified in stealing it legitimately according to the above teaching, provided he knows that the owner will not be thereby impoverished. The doctrine of "secret compensation" applies mostly to employees who consider they are being underpaid for their labor. A twenty-dollar-a-week cashier in a side-street cafeteria may consider herself underpaid and apply this principle to justify her pilfering of odd dimes and quarters from the cash register whenever she can safely do so. Many a cashier in a large bank or commercial business corporation has done just this until he found himself in jail for large-scale embezzlement. A desperate man could also easily argue himself into thinking that he is justly entitled to some of the surplus money of a rich victim and will go after it with a gun. Likewise grafting politicians seize upon the argument implicit in this teaching to justify their conviction that they are worth much more to the community than their elected offices pay them. Such a one was "sewer-pipe Connolly" of the Borough of Queens, N. Y., whose self-appropriations left large areas of New York City without an adequate sewer system.

This doctrine of "secret compensation" was, of course, unheard of in Christianity, even in the Catholic church, prior to the Jesuit casuists of the seventeenth century. It was invented by them along with other unethical doctrines such as "mental reservation", "the end justifies the means", "the end sanctifies the means" etc., to make Catholicism popular with the masses. It also helped to thinly rationalize their own exploits. Thus Catholic textbooks of moral theology today make no pretension of showing

that these principles of conduct take their origin from the Ten Commandments or from Christian revelation. They merely propound them as accepted Catholic doctrine and trace them back to Gury, the Jesuit fountain-head.

When Protestants uncover and attack this doctrine of "secret compensation", the Jesuits have a stock argument ready to meet it. Their alibi sounds like this: "The Catholic doctrine of secret compensation is limited to cases of dire emergency; its application is strictly qualified and limited. No Catholic takes it in the sense of a free-for-all license to steal."

The sophistry in this confusing of strict theory and loose practice is common to many other Catholic doctrines. It is found in the teaching about the worshipping of saints and their images. In theory the veneration of statues and medals can be rationalized and stripped of all appearance of superstition and idolatry. But in practice among the common people this means nothing. The millions of ignorant Catholics, from the semi-feudal peasantry of Europe to the Mexican peons and the superstitious-minded Latin Americans, attribute magical qualities to these images and feel that the Catholic church wholly approves of it. So with the doctrine of "secret compensation". Finespun distinctions of theologians mean nothing to the masses, above all

to children, even if you grant that nuns and other Catholic teachers know and take the pains to emphasize these scholastic subtleties.

The blunt fact, confirmed by countless cases, is that many Catholics just get the one idea from this teaching, namely, that stealing is not essentially evil at all times, but, on the contrary, fair and reasonable if one needs something badly enough and the owner does not. How this conviction can be stretched to cover untold cases is easy to imagine. It is limited only by the envy and self-prejudice of the individual conscience—which vary immeasurably from person to person.

All in all, it is most unfortunate that any religion is permitted to teach such a principle as part of the curriculum of American school education, much more if it should ever be taught in the public schools on the pretext of helping to lessen crime among the youth of America.

The fact of the matter is, that religion does not belong primarily in the school at all. It belongs in the home and church, and can only enter the school if the children bring it with them. The aim of the school is to *educate*, not to *sanctify* our children. It is the children who should sanctify the school, which they can do only if they come from homes and churches where true religious development is fostered.



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